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1938

Camellias
***Harvey Lamb***

Weather Fallacies
***Dean Blake***

Pest Control
***R. T. Jumper***

Book Reviews
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# You Can Grow Camellias . .

By HARVEY W. LAMB

There is such a satisfaction to lovers of flowers that everyone should have at least one or more beautiful Camellias in their yard. The Garden Encyclopedia states that they are "Evergreen trees and shrubs, native of Asia, belonging to the Tea family."

In Oceanside there is a Purity camellia, white, that is twenty-five years old and has grown to a height of about twelve feet, with a trunk four inches in diameter at the bottom. This tree has had little or no attention yet it produces abundance of bloom and would have been double the size if it had been given care. Camellias are slow growers at the start but will grow very fast after becoming set to a location and given water and fertilizer.

They are prized both for their beautiful glossy-green leaves and showy single, semi-double and double flowers of white, shades of pink, red and varigated colors of the same.

There are three distinct types of bloom: single, double and large ruffled double bloom. The most popular type with the amateur grower are the Pink Perfection and Rosita; the former a light pink and the latter deep rose pink, both very double.

All varieties of camellias in California will stand a small amount of frost without injury to the plant, yet frost will affect the buds and bloom.

There are two very important things to remember in growing camellias: they must have good drainage and never permitted to become very dry. In winter they should receive water at least once each month and in summer at least once each week. When watering be sure to give them enough to reach all roots but never sprinkle the buds or bloom during the flowering period. When the buds are forming never give them fertilizer; this tends to blight or blast the buds, causing them to drop.

With a range of varieties in your collection it is possible to have blooms from October into the spring months.

They do well out of doors or in pots or tubs, provided the pots or tubs are never permitted to suffer for food or water. If you plant in the ground the following will be worth while: First dig a large hole three feet deep, place in the bottom of the hole broken tile or brick to a depth of eighteen inches, then a thin layer of straw and four inches of top soil, tamp well; now add about ten pounds of cottonseed meal and fill the hole to the top with the following mixture of soil: mix well together one part of peat moss, one part good soil, one part oak leaf mold and a small amount of corse sand. Let this mixture soak well with water to settle the soil and when settled dig out a space and plant the balled plant, leaving the top of the ball extended about two inches above the other ground but be sure that all roots are covered. After the plant has become set, fertilize it with cow manure that is well rotted. Camellias like an acid soil. Four ounces of aluminum sulphate applied to the top soil out away from the plant and wet in will give it acid.

Camellias can be killed with kindness; never try to over-feed them to force growing, for after all the most vital treatment to give them is drainage and water. If they have the drainage they will never stand in water.

When planting do not plant on the sunny side and up against a reflecting wall. They do not like wind or extreme drafts. They like partially shaded places, yet some sun is necessary.

Camellias have been grown in California for many years, their popularity during the past few years has grown very fast and today people are appreciating their beauty as never before. Their blooming range has made them many friends, for next to the rose they produce bloom over a longer period than most plants in their class.

As a table decoration the Camellia bloom placed in a shallow dish with water lasts for days and retains its color and beauty. No flower is more beautiful on display.

Camellia blooms when placed in a shallow plate with water last for days and owing to the fact that they have rare beauty without fragrance, they are much in demand as flowers for the sick room or hospital.

# Some Weather Fallacies . . . .

DEAN BLAKE, Weather Bureau

From time immemorial, man has vainly attempted to predict the weather for weeks and months in advance. He has looked to the sky, the heavenly bodies, birds, animals, trees and flowers for signs, and, after countless generations, is still searching for some index that will enable him to predict storms, freezes, droughts or even less important weather changes. In fact, weather forecasting is as old as the dawn of man's intelligence. Proverbs dealing with supposed relations between weather and sky appearances have been found on clay tablets unearthed in Babylon. These were formulated and graven on stone more than 6000 years ago, and man still believes that somewhere, if only he can find it, there is some thing, animate or inanimate, which will furnish him with the clue to the weather of the future.

It is recognized that even an expression of one's convictions on the subject of long range forecasting is rather hazardous, as the whole matter is highly controversial. There are still many who firmly believe that crops should be planted during certain moon phases; that squirrels and other animals have an instinct not possessed by man, or any animals at large; that weather is predictable by astrometeorology, which the dictionary defines as "an investigation of the supposed relation between the heavenly bodies and the weather."

Bearing this in mind, no attempts are made to express other than accepted conclusions, and because of lack of space, only a few of the fallacies can be discussed. As the proof of the pudding is in the eating, so the proof of the prediction is in its verification, and no one is yet able to forecast the weather at any particular time and place for longer than a few hours in advance.

Of course, the "most famous unofficial weather prophet in America" is the groundhog. In Europe its role is assumed by the bear, the badger, and even the cat, as the following German proverb testifies: "If the cat is basking in the sun in February, it must go again to the stove in March." Groundhog day is February 2nd. Then, so the story goes, if this little animal emerges from his hole and sees his shadow, he concludes that there will be more winter, and he returns for another sleep. But if the sky is cloudy and casts no shadow, he remains up, as spring is not far off. This fallacy, like that of the equinoctial storm, is susceptible of proof, and has been exploded over and again by investigators who have taken the trouble to see whether or not it is true. Even the most credulous should find it hard to believe that the weather on any particular day indicates the weather of the succeeding weeks.

Among primitive races the moon occupies the most prominent place in weather lore and proverbs. And there are those in the more enlightened countries who are convinced that there are wet and dry moons. Until it is agreed which is the wet and which is the dry, forecasts from moon phases will have to be dismissed as offering dual verification, for popular interpretations of its weather indications are of an opposite character among different peoples. The doggerel that—

"The moon and the weather
May change together;
But change of the moon
Does not change the weather."

is absolutely true.

As one of our most competent authorities concludes: "Traditional notions about dry and wet moons are on a par with the old fashioned belief that certain periods of the lunar month are auspicious for cutting hair, finger-nails and corns."

Undoubtedly, there are many who will stoutly defend the belief that root crops should be planted at certain phases of the moon, and those that mature above ground at other phases. Like many other notions it has become firmly fixed through the years in spite of everything. Careful investigations have proven beyond the shadow of doubt, that there is no relation between the moon and crops. It is well known that where seeding and planting is carried on with the strictest regard to business and economy, moon phases are not considered, and it is far more profitable and reasonable to plant when the weather is auspicious, than when a certain part of the moon is visible.

It is conceded, however, that lunar halos, or, as the Zuni proverb poetically puts it, "The moon, if in house be, cloud it will, and rain soon will come," have predictive value, as they are caused by cirrostratus clouds, which are known to be fore-runners of storms in all latitudes. This belief is universal, and is found in all lands. It is one of the few of real worth, but is far from being infallible.

An interesting group of proverbs has grown up around plants. Take for example the following:

"Cottonwood and quaking asp trees turn up their leaves before rain."

"The morning glory folds up its petals at the approach of rain."

"Milkweed closing at night indicates rain."

Of the "poor man's weather glass"—the pimpernel—it is said: "When the pink-eyed pimpernel closes in the daytime, it is a sign of rain." Like the toy weather indicator in which a man comes out of the house if it is to rain, and the woman if it is to be fair, plants react to changes in moisture in the atmosphere, and such changes do not necessarily mean rain, but may result only in clouds or fogs.

One of the most popular weather proverbs of the eastern districts of our country runs like this:

"If the November goosebone be thick,
So will the winter be;
If the November goosebone be be thin,
So will the winter be."

It is recorded that in some communities the carving of the goose in November is attended by quite a ceremony, and that the fantasy has considerable following. Certainly, the breast bones selected with due

(Continued on page 8)

# Garden Strolls With the Editor

In line with our policy of other years to ease the strain on our association exchequer during the slim off-season months, we are combining two months' issues. We hope the increased number of timely articles by our well-informed contributors will make up for the issue skipped and that you will be inspired to attack your spring garden problems with renewed vigor.

Our selection for this issue of the outstanding plant was the Acacia and next month you will find notes by Miss Sessions on this group, which, to me, forms the keynote (the spring tonic, if you will) of our gardens. It was a hard choice with Bignonia venusta spreading its orange blanket everywhere, but the acacias, and especially Acacia Baileyana, seem to be more typical of our spring gardens. Do you agree?

Time to be thinking of your entries in the spring flower show. The next issue will contain the premium list out in time for you to study the various classes.

We still have complete files of CALIFORNIA GARDEN for sale. The nominal charge of 10c per copy seems like a real opportunity for local libraries to secure a garden record which in years to come should be very valuable. You know Uncle Sam thinks so much of our magazine that he subscribes to two copies and keeps them on file in Washington.

And now that this has developed into a sales talk, do you know we have a sustaining membership of $5.00 which some of our members support? This is the season of the year when our membership dues start coming in so let's all cooperate with Mr. Shoven in his drive for new members.

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Three good subjects for window boxes: Convolvulus mauritanicus, Lopesia albiflora and Lotus bertholeti.

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Veronica rupestris makes an ideal bank cover. Blooms in spring with a lovely shade of blue.

## January Meeting

The San Diego Floral Association meeting, first of the year, drew an appreciative audience of members and friends. Suggestions by Mrs. Greer for the club's New Year's resolutions included having more gardens, increasing membership, and keeping the Association's Building open each Sunday from 2 to 5, making the library available to those interested. Mr. Shoven, a new member of the Board of Directors, was introduced.

An informal and very interesting account, by Mrs. Larson of Encinitas, of her recent visit to the gardens of Mr. Lester Woodruff at Inglewood was given. Mr. Woodruff is a well known hybridizer of lilies. There were approximately a million lily blooms, all hybrids, and one particularly outstanding lily from cross-pollination of a white lily and red ones was mentioned by Mrs. Larson.

Mrs. O. M. Olson who recently returned from a trip to Norway, talked on the plant life and horticultural features of Norway. She first depicted the configuration of the country, and mentioned the fjords, the long days, and moderated climate due to the Gulf Stream, all of which affect the plant growth. Both flowers and fruits are much larger than in California. What Mrs. Olson thought was a desert plant—the cacti—she saw growing plentiously over the mountain sides.

The small homes with sod roofs, having flowers, small pine trees, etc., growing on them are very attractive. The roofs are made with pieces of birch bark, placed with concavity up, then filled with turf, and planted.

The King of Norway is very generous in allowing visitors to the beautiful gardens about the palace. Miles of nemophila — Baby-Blue-Eyes—border the walks.

The meeting closed with an instructive talk by Miss Sessions on various plants, trees, shrubs and flowers displayed. One, an exquisite flowering Eucalyptus from western Australia is a small slender tree having great clusters of buds covered with vermillion caps, and light colored flowers.—Mrs. G. M. Gibbs

## February Meeting

The February meeting of the San Diego Floral Association was featured by a very entertaining talk on Acacia varieties by Mr. C. J. Jerebek. He first made mention of three varieties grown elsewhere: the angry acacia which shows a trait for dislike to humans and animals; the so-called musical tree of West India—the wind passing through its branches produce musical sounds; and the insect tree of Soudan which produces a most weird sound after insects have bored holes in the wood. Over 500 other species are found inAsia, Africa and America. In Australia, any acacia tree (genus Acacia):—is called wattle, from the wattles, or hurdles, made from it by the settlers. A national holiday—a festive celebration—known as Wattle Day is held once a year.

An early introduction of the acacia into California was made by an Australian who came during the "gold rush" times. That was the melanoxylon (blackwood acacia). Prior to that was the farnesiana, being the first in the United States.

Mr. Jerebek exhibited fifty-two varieties from San Diego, each labeled with the proper name,—one of the finest displays given at the Club.

In an informal talk Miss Sessions who always gives much valuable information, described the specimens brought in. She advised soaking the acacia seeds in hot water before planting, as the seed coat is thick, crustaceous, and in this way, the time of growth is speeded.

Two prominent visitors, Mrs. Church and Mrs. Fitzgerald, from Walla Walla, Washington, specialists in hybridizing iris and peonies were introduced by Miss Sessions.

The president, Mrs. Greer, urged that Conservation Day, March 7th to 14th be devoted to the planting of native plants in the new native plant garden ni Balboa park. A club party was announced for Thursday evening, Feb. 24th. There will be cards, games, music, refreshments. And the beautiful punch bowl and glasses, a gift from Mrs. Herbert Evans, will be in service.

Mrs. Lester Wright is the chairman for the coming Garden Contest.—G. M. G.

# More About Pest Control . .

R. T. JUMPER

It would not be difficult to expand this article into 500 pages of detailed information covering the control of each species on every host plant. In fact most standard texts on Economic Entomology do cover that number of pages. But such an attempt would defeat the purposes of this article. It would be well, however, to mention briefly the seasonal aspects of the pest control job and say something about spray apparatus and its use.

**Winter Control**

Deciduous (fruit, ornamental and shade), trees, shrubs, and roses should be sprayed for over-wintering pests during winter dormancy or in the delayed dormant period of early spring before the buds burst. Petroleum Oil sprays should be used. This treatment cleans up Scale Insects, Mealybugs, Red Spider Eggs, Wood Borer eggs, etc., reducing the infestatons in spring and summer. Lime-Sulphur is also used as a dormant spray.

Spray Evergreens at the same time with a Petroleum Oil Spray. A number of the fruit and ornamental fruit trees such as peach, nectarine, apricot, plum, prune and cherry, should be sprayed in late winter before the buds burst, with Bordeaux Mixture, or other copper fungicide to prevent such fungous diseases as Leaf Curl and Brown Rot.

**Spring Control**

When new growth appears on perennials, trees, shrubs or roses or when annual flowers or vegetables start their first tender shoots, they are quickly attacked by Aphis and other sap-sucking insects. When Aphis are first observed, spray all tender plant growths with a Nicotine-Oil Spray or dust with Nicotine Dust. Repeat these applications every few weeks, (every week if necessary). The use of an Oil Spray helps prevent Mildew infection of most roses and many other plants. For fungous disease spray or dust with copper or sulphur fungicides. For chewing insects spray with Lead Arsenate or other "stomach poisons." The new Garden Rotenone Dusts are also effective in controlling chewing insects as well as Aphis and Thrips.

Young budding plants and vegetables are likely to be attacked by the night feeders, (Sow Bugs, Snails, Slugs, Cutworms). Clean out these pests with poisoned bait before they multiply and do serious damage. Three applications of a good bait, using 3 to 5 pounds for each application, at two week intervals, will usually clean up a city lot for the entire season. April is generally the best time to do this work in California.

**Summer Control**

With the first really warm weather, Red Spiders begin to show up, also Beetles, many Caterpillars and Worms. Scale Insects generally hatch the new brood in June, July or August, depending on species and season. Nearly all flowering plants should be sprayed with contact spray containing Nicotine and Petroleum Oil Spray for Aphis, Thrips, Leafhoppers and Red Sipders. Most plants should be sprayed or dusted with Garden Lead Arsenate or other "stomach poisons," once or twice during this season to control the various Beetles, Worms and Caterpillars.

Dust vegetables regularly with Nicotine or Rotenone Dust to kill Aphis, Leafhoppers, and Thrips. Dust with Rotenone Dust to control chewing insects. Dust with Sulphur to control most Mildews, Rusts and Red Spiders.

Many shade and fruit trees must be sprayed with a "stomach poison" such as Lead Arsenate or a combination of Lead Arsenate and an Oil Spray Emulsion to Control worms and beetles. The Oil Spray also tends to keep down Scale and Red Spiders.

Mealybugs will present the year around become most numerous and damaging in the late summer or fall months. An Oil Spray or Oil-Nicotine Spray, used at double strength and repeated as often as necessary is the best known treatment for Mealybugs.

**Spray Suggestions**

Complete coverage of the tree or plant with the spray material is essential to successful plant protection. This is particularly true in controlling sap-sucking insects, for if the insect is to be killed it must be covered with the spray material. Spray buds, fruit leaves, (both sides), twigs and branches. In dusting, dust must be blown into the center of the plant and under the leaves as well as on the top surfaces.

Follow the directions given on the label, whatever spray material you may be using. Do not use stronger or weaker solutions than recommended. Reputable manufacturers make careful tests for both effectiveness and safety before putting these directions on the package.

Pest control can be no better than the degree of thoroughness with which the spray materials are applied. The gardener who wishes to maintain a healthy, productive and attractive garden must equip himself with adequate garden tools. Select a sprayer that will permit application of a thorough, forceful, drenching spray. Satisfactory results can not be secured with the little tin "fly-spray" type of sprayer.

**Practice Garden Sanitation**

Well-fed, well-watered, clean-cultivated plants or trees are not as susceptible to attack from insects or diseases as are poorly-cared for or undernourished plants. Proper feeding, water and sanitation are necessary to the health of plants just as they are to human welfare. Feed and water your plants regularly, without overdoing either. Keep old trash, weeds, boards, leaves, etc., cleand up as they offer ideal spots for insects and disease spores to hibernate or develop.

Ed. Note: This concludes Mr. R. T. Jumper's recommendations on a complete pest control program for the home garden.

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**FLOWER SHOW DATES**

Coronado, April 23rd and 24th.

S. D. Floral Ass'n., April 30th and May 1st.

Pacific Beach, May 8th and 9th.

# Your Water Garden

**By Bertha M. Thomas**

If you have not cleaned your Water Garden, remember that there are good reasons for not neglecting over it. There are some vicious water bugs which live in the muck at the bottom and which can destroy good size fish. We have found they also eat the small fry. The fish love clean mud and sand but the dregs of a pool are rotted leaves and fish food. Therefore your pets appreciate clean water.

The lilies need fresh soil and fertilizer. Hardy ones will do over the second year with a new top dressing but the tropicals are such greedy feeders that if you want large blossoms they must have fresh food for their roots. And hardy ones really are needing diversion of roots. If one cares to raise baby fish best results will be obtained by placing only one pair of medium size fish in the pool. The extra inhabitants only serve to eat up each other's baby fish. As soon as the water is warm the fish will spawn—February or March—depending on the weather, and of course the baby fish have a healthier home( or more strictly speaking—a better feeding place) if the water in the pool is old enough to be full of the microscopic animal life. The submerged plants are homes and breeding places for this food and a water pool will house 100 to 200 varieties. One cannot have too many growing plants for the comfort of the fish—the more plants in the pool, the more oxygen in the water and the shade of lily leaves keeps the water cool during the hot weather.

# Poinsettias

When you were admiring the Poinsettias did you give them a sort of "once over" look of amazement at the size and an exclamation of delight at the colors or did your minds eye realize that a great share of its glory is in the contrast of the red, the green and the yellow?

The real flowers are clustered in the center, each one with a two-lipped saffron on one side and the green setting underneath. They are of two sexes, the numerous males with only one stamen each and the fewer females which lift themselves by a lengthening footstalk quite outside and grow down opposite the saffron cup which contains the honey. Seeds are really matured.

The parts we would call petals are not such but are true leaves colored to accentuate the bloom. In the double this queerly arranged "center" throws out more bracts which grow to a height of sometimes 6in. and are so crowded as to give it a strange appearance.

It is only the last few years we have had the double ones here but they are not anything new. One of our floral people, Mrs. E. W. Delacour tells that she lived 6 years in old Mexico. That she never saw our single blooms till coming to San Diego, but the double ones grew so plentiful that one could purchase a basketfull from the natives at three cents a dozen.

And a great many lovers of Poinsettias are venturesome enough to admire the single blooms more than the double.

So easily grown from cuttings, so gloriously beautiful and San Diego naturally the best spot in the United States for their cultivation, it is a crime against civic pride that every home in our city has not a dozen plants.—B. M. T.

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March 7 to 14 is to be observed throughout California as Conservation Week, Tree Planting Week, Arbor Days and a time for Garden Work.

The Floral Association should do something that week that would be monumental. The next meeting will be March 17, three days after Conservation Week has passed and since California Garden will be in the hands of the members on March 1, I am suggesting that we do something about the native plant garden proposed for the Park. Many years ago there was quite a big gathering in the Park and trees were planted on March 7th—about the first Arbor Day that I can recall.

I would furnish 10 Ceanothus arboreaus and 10 Ceanothus cyaneus plants as a donation to the cause. Mr. Jerabeck could take charge of the planting.

K. O. SESSIONS.

(Ed. note: This would be a grand start for our native garden. This fine gift of Miss Sessions' plants might be the beginning of a world famous garden. Watch the daily papers for further developments.)

# Propagating Our Pests

**By Frederick G. Jackson**

One of the fundamentals of gardening has been to try to utilize all wastes. All cuttings and rakings uppings can be used to increase the humus of the soil and make the garden a better place to grow flowers.

This theory may have been started by Adam. Doubtless for him it worked beautifully, in his early days. Since then not only the serpent, but a large variety of crawling and destroying vermin have crept into the garden, until now a large part of gardening has become a war against pests.

We spray and we dust, we poison and we trap, but the new generations come marching on to destroy. Where from? Why, the compost heap, or the soil itself that we have infected in our zeal for economy. Why do the leaves fall off your rose bushes? Probably because there are spiders on them. If you spade those leaves into the ground, you give the spiders a perfect spawning place. Soon you will have many spiders.

It is very unusual to grow such big, juicy shady plants as dahlias without having snails on them. The snails like the blossoms best. I have even seen one there at one of our dahlia shows, but they may hibernate on a leaf or a stem. If you bury those leaves and stems in your dahlia bed in the autumn, next spring a brood of baby snails will come up just in time to eat off the new sprouts from your precious bulbs.

So let's try a new doctrine. Let the trash-man take away your pests with the cuttings and the raking-uppings. Pay a little more for clean mulches and fertilizers, and you will need to pay less for poisons.

## Historical Society Honors Geo. W. Marston

**By Arthur M. Shoven**

The recollections from the sources of a rich mind were heard by some members of our Floral Ass'n. We regret more did not take advantage of the invitation to our membership, from the San Diego Historical Society, to attend their annual meeting.

The principal speaker is recognized by his fellow citizens for his vision of civic affairs, for intellgent and aggressive citizenship. He is a builder of men; a lover of nature. His pioneer life has been an inspiration to many of the members of the Floral Ass'n. of which he is a member. They honor him for his well planned gardens, his life long purpose to make the city of San Diego outstanding in its beauty, his development of historical Presidio Park, and his work with the comprehensive Nolen Plan, of which he was the originator.

This person is of course, no other than our own George W. Marston. His well presented subject of "My first ten years in San Diego," was intimate, humorous, historical, and an inspiration to his large audience which filled the House of Hospitality auditorium. Mr. Marston received an ovation such as is seldom given from an audience.

The Floral Ass'n. was honored for the unusual ability of a group of our members. These ladies were recognized by the San Diego Historical Society in an invitation to decorate the auditorium and tables. These civic minded ladies should be appreciated for their extraordinary displays of flowers, fruits and garden subjects on many occasions in our city. The group was composed of the following members: Mrs. M. A. Greer, Mrs. Lester Wright, Mrs. Robt. Morrison, Miss Etta Schweider, Mrs. John Nuttal, Mrs. Arthur Shoven, Mrs. H. F. Tucker, Miss Alice Halliday.

The arrangement was alluring and a subject of conversation of a large gathering of our leading citizens. The first to attract the attention was an appripriate setting of many lighted candles in old fashioned candleabra. Festoons of interwinding Bignonia in full bloom with masses of acacia and bridal veil genista, and on each table center citrus fruits and foliage in numerous variety, such as kumquats, limes, oranges, etc. The color motif was yellow of various shades. Such arrangements added greatly to an evening long to be remembered.

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## A Plea for Liquid Fertilizer

To begin with, the accepted theory seems to be that plants grow best in a neutral soil, that is a soil with a neutral pH, or a pH of 7. This theory is based on many successful experiments in field and laboratory where high pHs or alkaline soils have been brought down near neutral or slightly acid. The use of imported peat has become a common practice among nurserymen in potting soil or in the field, this peat as a rule has a pH of approximately 2 or less. Aluminum Sulphate is another material that has been widely advertised and used for correcting high alkalinity. Care must be taken that any material we use has no toxic effect on plant life either in direct application or in residual effects. Peat has none that I know of, but we musn't loose sight of the fact that peat has no plant food value and its decomposition is extremely slow and that all nutriment must be added in the way of natural soil, leaf mold or other humus-making material. A potting soil containing proper ingredients as a rule has a pH of neutral or acid and under most conditions in a nursery will bring a plant to successful conclusion. In pot work especially are we working with a very concentrated area, an area that has only one side for additional material and that in only a minor degree as the pot is usually filled to almost the top. What additional material do we add in almost unlimited quantities? Water. Alkaline water too in most cases as that is very nearly the universal condition of our water in California, some of our water alkaline to the point of Black Alkali according to some authorities. Now what I am getting at is this, that as long as your potting soil remains acid the addition of water does no harm but as the original soil disappears the alkaline salts from the water become insoluble and remain in the pot and the more the soil becomes alkaline the greater deposit of these harmful salts so that eventually the original potting soil has become toxic and the plant refuses to grow properly or to produce. The addition of the usual fertilizers at or near this point does no good whatsoever, in fact the application of such material as blood meal may do additional harm in that it will form a solid mat on top of the pot almost impervious to water. Repotting sometimes is a remedy but this doesn't correct the condition immediately around the roots and that is where the remedy is needed. Roots have two or more functions, they absorb and exude. They absorb when the food is to their liking and they exude root solution that under normal conditions makes the food to their liking; the food directly surrounding a root is acid from the root solution but as the surrounding soil becomes alkaline it becomes harder and harder for the root solution to counteract and eventually it gives up in disgust and we have root rot and dying away of the plant.

If nurseries could dispose of a plant with reasonable assurance that the purchaser would continue to get good results one of their troubles would be done away with. If nurserymen could supply each purchaser of a potted plant with some material, call it fertilizer if you care to, that would continue to keep soils near neutral and at the same time furnish necessary plant food he would be doing himself and his customer no end of good to say nothing of the plant.

Now is a good time of year to plant Trees, Shrubs, Vines

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# Two Book Reviews . . . . .

By LESTER ROWNTREE, Carmel, Calif.

Those of you who met Cynthia Wescott on her brief visit to California this January, who saw her beautiful enlarged paintings of the bugs and diseases which wreck our plants and heard her describe methods of prevention and combat, know of her book "The Plant Doctor" (N. Y. Stokes, $2.00).

Those who did not will at least be cheered to learn that there are more pests in the East than out here in the West (probably because there are more gardens,—their favorite feeding grounds—in the East). Though the plant material in our gardens differs very much from that in eastern gardens, the bugs which eat it are not so very different. And the antidotes are not different at all.

This book has been written, not from material found in other books, but from the notes taken during many years of experience in the Doctor's own garden and in those of her clients. It is illustrated with several photographs and with many line drawings made by the author. And it is to the point, practical, efficient, very readable, and a first-aid to the pest-harried gardener.

Whether you are one of those unfortunates or not, you will find "The Plant Doctor" as necessary to your garden shelves as the baby books are to young mothers, and the remedies which it prescribes as essential to good gardening as the bottle of iodine and the roll of adhesive tape are to your bathroom cupboard.

The war upon garden pests has here been made as easy to wage as possible. Dr. Wescott asks us to give to the task only an average of one hour a week from March to November (that of course is in the East—out here we must be vigilant in the winter months as well) and says "I can practically guarantee you a reasonably healthy garden provided you use the time intelligently and conscientiously and omit grumbling because these things have to be."

While the book is written simply, the writer is really a very learned person. She took her Ph.D at Cornell and for ten years was on the staff of the Plant Pathology Department of that university.

Then she decided she had had enough of looking at bugs through a microscope and that what gardeners needed was the practical application of the principles the laboratories were discovering. Therewith she hung out her shingle in a suburban New Jersey town as a practising plant physician and since then she has been so busy with her patients that the only time she can leave them is when they are safely dormant.

## Shakespeare Gardens

If you have visited the Shakespeare Garden in Golden Gate Park, you will have seen some of the possibilities of a garden restricted to the fifty-odd plants which the Bard mentioned in his plays and sonnets. You may be impelled to create a Shakespeare Garden for yourself, for your club or community, or for a flower show. In which case Annie Burnham Carter's "Shakespeare Gardens" (Phila. Dorrance, $1.25) is the book for you.

Mrs. Carter's treatment of the subject is very clear, simple and to the point. After a short introductory chapter on sixteenth and seventeenth century English gardens she discusses the garden's design, giving the few general principles to be followed. This matter of design and construction is important—as important as is the plant material to be used. Your little Shakespeare garden will not need much room and may not be especially colorful, but it will have plenty of character and lots of fragrance.

Then in the chapter on Planting the Garden the plant material itself is taken up, item by item, in little biographies: where the plant came from, what the Elizabethan Parkinson and the Elizabethan Gerard said about it, what Shakespeare himself said, what its pretty old names were, how it looks and, frequently, how best to grow it. And the next chapters, on Herb Beds and on bulbs, shrubs and vines, are filled with this same delightful sort of discussion. Incidentally, in spite of the way in which "Herbs for the Garden" have been canvassed and re-canvassed in the last ten years, you will find some new data in this herb chapter.

Lists of flowers and of quotation references complete the book. There is a lot of information tucked into this small volume, not the least of which is its matching up of old flower names to their proper flowers—something which only too often we are apt to get quite wrong.

## All-American Selections

Ever since 1933, if you have been deeply interested in gardening and new developments in the gardening field, you have looked forward eagerly to the "All-America Selections."

For the benefit of those just beginning to develop an interest in gardening, I will explain just what constitutes the yearly "All-America Selections."

Each year an important national seed organization endeavors to obtain from all over the world proposed new worthy varieties of flowers and vegetables commonly propagated from seed. The seed is obtained the season before the expected introduction.

Then in 12 different locations in America, embracing a wide range of climatic conditions, trials of these flowers and vegetables are run in open-field competition. From these trials, entered under genus and number only, the judges — competent men in the seed world—select the outstanding varieties and feature them to the gardeners of America.

Since 1933, when the first awards were made, many of these selections have entirely revolutionized the gardener's ideas of what constitutes "tops" in certain flowers and vegetables, and selections are eagerly awaited each year; for gardeners know that in this group are to be found the newest and best of new

introductions in flowers and vegetables.

Space does not permit of describing the flower and vegetable selections in one article, but here are the flower selections for 1938:

**Petunia, SALMON SUPREME**—Award of Merit. A dwarf bedding variety of a distinct new, light salmon, with white throat. Bushy plants growing about 12 inches high. A heavy bloomer over a long season.

**Antirrhinum, CELESTIAL**—Award of Merit. Large salmon-rose flowers on large, compact spikes. This variety is not rust-resistant, however.

**Pansy, CORONATION GOLD**—Award of Merit. Round, lightly ruffled, spicy scented canary yellow flowers with lower petals flushed golden orange.

**Calliopsis, GOLDEN CROWN**—Award of Merit. Enlarged Drummondi type of orange-yellow or gold, some with extra row of petals. 12 inch wiry stems for nice cutting. Pleasing fragrance.

**Calendula, ORANGE FANTASY**—Award of Merit. Distinct, dwarf, heavy foliage plant with orange flowers coming true with seal-brown crest of petals in center.

**Petunia, ORCHID BEAUTY**—Award of Merit. Dwarf, all-double, giant fringed variety of extra size on sturdy plants. Color is orchid or light lilac, heavily veined violet.

**Petunia, GAIETY**—Special Mention. Dwarf, all-double, giant fringed variety of large size. Color is rose or light rose-red with white colorings. Double and semi-double flowers.

**Petunia, TOPAZ**—Special Mention. Hybrida type, 2 inch flowers of clean, light cerise or topaz rose, running true. Strong scent; rather erect growth. Continuous bloomer. Holds color well in sun.

Recommended Varieties — Non-Awards:

**Marigold, GOLDEN WEST**—Golden Orange, large Guinea Gold type.

**Petunia, BLUE GEM**—Light violet blue, white throat, hybrida nana compacta.

**Zinnia, NAVAJO MIXED**—Bicolored gaillardia-flowered.

# State Conservation

State Conservation week is March 7th to 14th and everybody should be interested in planting something permanent that week.

Consider the World's finest Juniper for a choice evergreen of medium size and perpetual beauty. The Incense cedar for a living Christmas tree, a Jacaranda mimosaefolia for a flowering tree, an evergreen Elm for an out-of-doors living room.

For permanent vines a Bignonia Venusta or flame vine with flowers from November to March, or the ever-blooming Bougainvillea Crimson Lake or the graceful winter blooming Carolina Jasmine. The Heavenly blue morning glory, an annual quick growing and flowering from summer until December, giving its seed in abundance to plant in April.

Select a native shrub and a package of California Poppy seed, the mixed improved colors, scattered over the parking space for the whole block where you live and the seed once planted will make a showing every year thereafter. Hoe out the weeds before you plant the seed. Fine strawberry Guavas or an Orange tree for fruits, very useful plants and beautiful.

Growing plants in San Diego is the best Civic work that everybody can engage in, by making the bare spots colorful and attractive or useful for ourselves and for our visitors. This favorable season for planting we should make the most of for March and April are the two best planting months of the whole year.

My Hakea multilineata is more beautiful each day and there are an abundance of buds which will prolong the flower display for many months. It will become a popular winter flowering shrub and will be grown from seed.

The Christmas or native berry Heteromeles arbutifolia, the Hawthorns in variety and also Cotoneasters will make superior and faster growing plants if the seed is planted and this spring time is just right to do it so do not delay gathering some seed and plant it.

Be sure to trim your Acacia trees as soon as their floral beauty has passed so they will be handsome next year.

The California native plant garden in Balboa Park should be dedicated in Conservation Week, March 7th to 14th this year.

The site selected by Mrs. Mary Greer, Miss Halliday, Miss Sessions and Mr. Jerebeck is a most favorable location, quite secluded from the higher sections of the park and is the second canyon to the east from the Agave and Aloe garden. It is reached on the south by the road leading from the Aloe garden to the public golf links. It contains many fine specimens of many excellent native shrubs that have never been disturbed, also many desirable annuals. Nearby, to the east is a planting of the California Coast redwoods established only a few years ago and at the northern edge is a good grove of Olive trees.

—K. O. Sessions

# Some Weather Fallacies

(Continued from page 2)

regard to time and condition would be contradictory, both as regards their character and the manner of their interpretation, and little or no credence can be placed on such trivialities.

Volumes of weather proverbs and lore have been written, and one would expand a discussion almost indefinitely. Not all are foolish—some are wise. Some are founded on keen observation—but more in chance occurrences. Many have no more value than the saying among the Negroes that chickens should be picked in the dark of the moon, reasons for which are obvious, but hardly meteorological.

There is one fallacy common in San Diego that needs some comment before closing. In winter we often hear that the weather is cold because of the snow in the mountains. It is hard to see, how thermometer readings as low as 10 degrees can be produced by snow covers many miles away, the temperature of which must be near 32 degrees, when, within a short distance there is a body of relatively warm water over which our pre-

vailing winds are blowing! Surely, it is not the snow that causes the cold, but the cold that causes the snow. All of our cold weather is the result of polar air invasions, and storms that are attended by temperatures low enough to produce heavy snowfalls are followed by unusually cold weather after the sky clears.

## Pan-American Society of Tropical Research

February 3, 1938

Editor "California Garden"
San Diego, California
Dear Sir:

During the 1937 tropical expedition conducted by our Society, we were successful in bringing back nearly three million seeds of a species of plant, known by its native name as "Yerba de la Pulga." The extensive experiments and observations that have been made by our botanical department indicate that this plant possesses exceptional insect repelling qualities, and it is our belief that the plant not only contains, but actually exudes sufficient quantities of the drug "rotenone" to make a single growing specimen of the plant repellant to practically all forms of inspect life in the area of some 15 to 20 odd square feet. In other words, a Yerba de la Pulga plant in the average sized room should keep that room free from insect pests.

Since our return from the tropics, we have distributed nearly a million seeds of this plant free of charge and without obligation, to all parties requesting them and sending us a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

As it is our wish to distribute the entire three million seeds in the United States before May 15, 1938, we are requesting your co-operation in asking you to publish a statement in the forthcoming issue of your magazine to the effect that your subscribers, or readers, may obtain a packet of four Yerba de la Pulga seeds without cost or obligation, providing they will send us a request for same and a stamped, self-addressed envelope. With each packet of seeds, we will include a printed pamphlet describing the values of the plant, how to plant and grow the seeds, and what results may be expected.

Considerable publicity regarding this offer on the part of our Society has already been given by The United Press, The Frederic J. Hasken Information Bureau, and several radio station. As evidence of this, we are enclosing a photostatic print of news releases that have appeared within the past few months.

Trusting that we may have your co-operation in our efforts to curb the spread of disease, by the elimination of obnoxious insect pests throughout the United States, we are,

Sincerely yours,
Pan American Society of
Tropical Research
J. M. SHEPPARD,
Commander.


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